REMARKS

Many of the claims in the application have been amended to delete the term "outer" in connection with the surface of the article being analyzed. Support for these amendments can be found in the specification on Page 13, Lines 17-19, wherein it is stated that "this invention may be used to generate a visual representation of any desired surface of any desired article for any desired purpose."

The Examiner rejected all of the claims in the application under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite because of the use of the terms "relatively small" and "relatively large" without any standard for determining such relative sizes. This rejection is respectfully traversed. These terms are not intended to define any particular sizes for the small and large areas of the article. Rather, such terms are used for the purpose suggested by the Examiner in Paragraph 3 of the Office Action, namely, that the representations of the small areas are smaller, relatively speaking, than the representation of the large area. Thus, it is believed that the claims are clear and unambiguous in this regard.

The Examiner rejected independent Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by the Pike et al. reference. The Examiner also rejected independent Claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious in view of the combined teachings of the Pike et al. and Sones et al. references. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 has been amended to define the invention as a method for analyzing irregularities formed in a surface of an article. Initially, a plurality of representations of different, relatively small areas of the irregularities formed in the surface of the article are obtained. Then, the plurality of representations is processed to generate a single representation of a relatively large area of the irregularities formed in the surface of the article. Lastly, the single representation of the relatively large area of the irregularities formed in the surface of the article is analyzed. Claim 11 has been amended to define the invention as a method for analyzing irregularities formed in a surface of a rotatable article to determine the presence of a preferential lead. Initially, a plurality of representations of different, relatively small areas of the irregularities formed in the surface of the article is obtained. Then, the plurality of representations

is processed to generate a single representation of a relatively large area of the irregularities formed in the surface of the article. Lastly, the single representation of the relatively large area of the irregularities formed in the surface of the article to determine the presence of a preferential lead is analyzed.

Thus, all of the claims in the application recite a method for analyzing irregularities formed in an outer surface of an article. As set forth in the specification, "the size and orientation of the irregularities formed in the outer circumferential surface of the shaft are so small as to be not visible to the naked eye or otherwise readily ascertainable." This clearly distinguishes the claimed invention from both the Pike et al. and Sones et al. references, neither of which relate to the analyzing of such irregularities formed in an outer surface of an article. Thus, the claims are patentable over such references.